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SEPTEMBER 10 1980

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Dear Senator McGovern:

I have received your letter of August 18, 1980, with which you enclosed a letter from Mr. Bert Lockwood of the International Commission of Jurists.

We share your concern over the recent setbacks in democratic political development in the Republic of Korea, and over the current trial of Mr. Kim Dae Jung and others. We have repeatedly made clear to the Korean authorities, both publicly and privately, our serious concern for Mr. Kim Dae Jung and his co-defendants. We have publicly stated our feeling that some of the charges against Mr. Kim appear "farfetched." We have been particularly concerned that the judicial proceedings against those charged be fair and open to international observers.

Mr. Robert G. Rich, Director of the Office of Korean Affairs has spoken with Mr. Lockwood and other representatives of the International Commission of Jurists on several occasions and has assured them of our support for their attendance at Mr. Kim's trial. We strongly and repeatedly urged the Korean Government to permit observers from such widely respected non-governmental organizations as the International Commission of Jurists and Amnesty International, to attend Mr. Kim's trial. Unfortunately, our repeated requests and appeals were unsuccessful.

Both we and the Japanese Government have had diplomatic observers present at all sessions of the current trial in Seoul. The American diplomatic observation has been enhanced by the presence of the Deputy Assistant Legal Adviser of the Department of State who is not only observing trial sessions but meeting with defense and prosecution attorneys and family members of the defendants in order not only to symbolize our American concern for fair and equitable process but to improve our understanding of this politically significant judicial proceeding.

The Honorable
George McGovern,
United States Senate.

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We continue to regret the unwillingness of the Korean Government to permit representatives of respected private international organizations also to observe the trial and we will continue to urge the Korean Government to permit such organizations normal access to Korea.

Sincerely,

J. Brian Atwood
Assistant Secretary
for Congressional Relations

Enclosure:

Correspondence returned.

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